

Maisonneuve & Larose

Imām Ghazālī's Cosmology Reconsidered with Special Reference to the Concept of "Tabarūt"

Author(s): Kojiro Nakamura

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Studia Islamica*, No. 80 (1994), pp. 29-46

Published by: [Maisonneuve & Larose](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1595850>

Accessed: 19/12/2011 05:33

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Maisonneuve & Larose is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Studia Islamica*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Imām Ghazālī's cosmology reconsidered* with special reference to the concept of *jabarūt*

(I)

Concerning the cosmology of Imām Ghazālī (d. 1111), we have only a few studies and occasional comments since A.J. Wensinck (¹). This may be due to the fact that the problem is deeply involved in the complicated

* This is the enlarged and revised edition of the paper read for the XVIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Rome, 3-8 September, 1990.

(1) A.J. Wensinck, "On the Relation between Ghazali's Cosmology and His Mysticism", *Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Ser. A*, LXXXV (1933), 183-209; do., *La pensée de Ghazali* (Paris, 1940), Ch. III; do., "Ghazali's Mishkat al-Anwār (Niche of Light)", *Semietische Studiën uit de Natuurwetenschap van Prof. dr A.J. Wensinck* (Leiden, 1941), 192-212; L. Gardet, "Alam", *EP*, I, 349-52; A.A. Affifi, "Taṣdir 'amm" in his edition of *Mishkat*, 1-35; W.H.T. Gairdner, "Introduction" to his translation, *al-Ghazali's Mishkat al-Anwar* (Repr. Lahore, 1952), 1-72; do., "Al-Ghazali's Mishkat al-Anwār and the Ghazali-Problem", *Der Islam*, V (1914), 121-53; W.M. Watt, "A Forgery in al-Ghazali's *Mishkat*?", *JRAS*, 1949, 5-22.

issues of Ghazālī's « esoteric » teachings⁽²⁾ and the authenticity of his writings⁽³⁾. I will, in this paper, clarify the cosmological concepts of *mulk*, *malakūt* and *jabarūt*, especially that of *jabarūt*, which is little touched on by Wensinck. In order to conduct our research on a solid basis, I will confine myself to the following *textes recus* as the source materials :

- 1) *Arba'in* : *Kitāb al-arba'in fi uṣūl al-dīn*. Cairo : al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyah al-Kubrā, 1344/1925.
- 2) *Iḥyā'* : *Iḥyā' ʻulām al-dīn*. 4 vols. Cairo : Īsā l-Bāb al-Halabī, n.d.
- 3) *Iljām* : *Iljām al-‘awāmm ‘an ‘ilm al-kalām*, in *Quṣūr al-‘awāli* (Cairo : Maktabah al-Jundi, n.d.), 239-301.
- 4) *Imlā'* : *Kitāb al-imlā' fi ishkālat al-Iḥyā'*. *Iḥyā'* (*ibid.*), I, 55-203 (margin).
- 5) *Jawābir* : *Jawābir al-Qur'an*. Beirut : Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah, 1393/1973.
- 6) *Kimiyyā* : *Kimiyyā-yi sa'ādat*. Tehran : Kitābkhanah wa-Chapkhānah-yi Markāzī, 1334³.
- 7) *Maqsad* : *al-Maqsad al-asnā fi sharḥ ma'āni asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā*. Ed. by F.A. Shehadi. Beirut : Dār al-Mashriq, 1986.
- 8) *Mibakk* : *Mibakk al-naẓar fi l-mantiq*. Beirut : Dār al-Nahḍah al-Ḥadīthah, 1966.
- 9) *Mishkāt* : *Mishkāt al-anwār*. Ed. by Abu 'l-A'la 'Affifī. Cairo : al-Dār al-Qawmiyah, 1964.
- 10) *Mizān* : *Mizān al-'amal*. Ed. by S. Dunyā. Cairo : Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1964.
- 11) *Munqidh* : *al-Munqidh min al-dalāl*. Ed. by J. Ṣalibā & K. 'Iyād. Damascus : Maktab al-'Arabī, 1939³.
- 12) *Mustaṣfā* : *al-Mustaṣfā min 'ilm al-uṣūl*. 2 vols. Cairo : al-Maṭba'ah al-Amīriyah, 1322-24 AH.
- 13) *Tahāfut* : *Tahāfut al-falāsifah*. Ed. by S. Dunyā. Cairo : Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1966.

(2) For this problem, see my article, "The Study of al-Ghazālī in Retrospect – with reference to his alleged 'esoteric' teachings" (in Japanese), *Oriento*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1979), 1-20.

(3) For this problem, see the following works and articles : 'Abd al-Rahmān Badawī, *Mu'alafat al-Ghazālī*. Cairo, 1961 ; M. Bouyges, *Essai de chronologie des œuvres de al-Ghazālī (Algazel)*. Ed. par M. Allard. Beirut, 1959 ; G.F. Hourani, "The Revised Chronology of Ghazālī's Writings", *JAOS*, 104/2 (1984), 289-302 ; H. Lazarus-Yafeh, "Philosophical Terms as a Criterion of Authenticity in the Writings of al-Ghazālī", *Studia Islamica*, XXV (1966), 111-21 ; W.M. Watt, "The Authenticity of the Works Attributed to al-Ghazālī", *JRAS*, 1952, 24-45.

(II)

Ghazālī's cosmology is represented by the triad : *mulk*, *malakūt* and *jabarūt*. In the article on his cosmology and mysticism⁽⁴⁾, Wensinck traced the origin and development of these terms from the Qur'an, Hadith, Fārābī, Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', Ibn Sinā through Ghazālī. According to him, the term *jabarūt* does not appear in the Qur'an. It first occurs in the Hadith, in combination with *malakūt* and other terms, denoting the greatness and sovereignty of God. As for *malakūt* and *mulk*, they are used in the same sense of "sovereignty", "kingdom" and "kingship" period. But *malakūt* appears in the Qur'an only four times, probably because it is a loan word, like *jabarūt*, from the Aramaic⁽⁵⁾ : twice as "the kingdom of the heavens and the earth" (6:75, 7:185), and twice as "the sovereignty of all things" (23:89, 36:83).

The same is true with the Qur'anic usage of the word *mulk*. It is used in the sense of "the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth" twenty times referring to God. But *mulk*, in contradistinction to *malakūt*, is also employed for the humans (2:247). And later it came to refer mostly to them, and further to the phenomenal world. Parallel with this development, the meaning of *malakūt* narrowed to connote the divine, spiritual world, and to be identified with the Qur'anic *al-ghayb*, or the world of mystery.

As for the philosophers (Fārābī, Ibn Sinā and Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'), Wensinck concludes that *malakūt* or *jabarūt* is certainly used in the sense of "the Active Intellect" (*al-'aql al-fa' 'al*) or "the spiritual world" in the emanational scheme of Neo-platonism, but it is not used in combination with the word *mulk*. It is Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī who used the two terms together the first time, and this influenced Ghazālī's usage of these terms, although the relation between *malakūt* and *jabarūt* is reversed in al-Makkī⁽⁶⁾.

Then, Wensinck proceeds to discuss Ghazālī's own cosmology. Unfortunately, however, his interpretation draws too much on Neo-platonism, relying on such disputed, dubious works as *Ma'ārij al-quds*, *Durrab al-fakhirah* and *al-Risālah al-ladunyah*.

(4) A.J. Wensinck, "On the Relation between Ghazālī's Cosmology and His Mysticism" (*ibid.*).

(5) Wensinck, *ibid.*, 3 (185); A. Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an* (Baroda, 1938), 270-71.

(6) Considering also the usage of these terms in later authors like Suhrawardi Maqtūl and Ibn 'Arabī, Ghazālī seems to be in quite a unique position (See below, p. 16). It may be worth speculating on the reason behind it.

(III)

The world of *mulk* ('alam al-*mulk*) for Ghazālī is the material world seen by the physical eye (*başar*), and usually called "the world of kingdom and witnessing" ('alam al-*mulk wa'l-shahādah), denoting the phenomenal world. Behind this world lies another world : the world of mystery or the world of divine spirits and angels, which is known only by the inner, spiritual eye (*başirah*). Ghazālī calls it "the world of mystery and sovereignty" ('alam al-*ghayb wa'l-malakūt), or what we call the invisible world.**

The phenomenal world and the invisible world should not be literally taken to be simply two parts of the physical world : one is visible to the physical eye, and the other not. They are of totally different dimension. Ghazālī also calls them respectively the '*'alam al-khalq*' and the '*'alam al-amr*', and explains the former as the world of quantity (*kammiyah*) and extent (*miqdār*), which is the object of estimation (*taqdir*), and the latter as the world beyond quantity and extent (*Iḥyā'*, III, 370-71), or "the world which God has brought into existence without gradation by the eternal command (*al-amr al-azali*), and which remains in one and the same state with neither increase nor decrease in it" (*Imlā'*, 187) (7).

The *malakūt* is also the world of the Preserved Tablet (*al-lawb al-mahfuz*) in which all the divine predestination from the beginning of the world to the Hereafter is recorded (8). Certainly it is a creation of God, but it is an everlasting world, distinguished from the ordinary world of constant vicissitudes and changes (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 489).

The *malakūt* is also the world of prophecy (*nubuwwah*) and revelation (*wahy*), which transcends reason ('*aql*) and imagination (*khayāl*). Just as the stage of reason is beyond that of sense-perception, so the stage of *malakūt* is beyond that of reason. Therefore, as those who are born blind do not admit the existence of the world of colors and forms, even if they

(7) The arguments concerning *khalq* and *amr* come from the Qur'anic verses, "They will ask thee concerning the Spirit (*ruh*). Say : The Spirit is of the command of my Lord (*min amr Rabbī*)" (17:85) and "Verily, his are the creation and the command (*al-khalq wa 'l-amr*)" (7:54). In contradistinction to the ordinary exegesis that takes *amr* as "thing" (*sba'n*) or "command" in opposition to "prohibition" (*naby*), and *khalq* as "creation", Ghazālī here takes *khalq* as "estimation" (*taqdir*) rather than "creation", and thus he takes *amr* as different from something estimable, that is, something created, but non-corporeal and unchanging (Cf. *Arba'in*, 53-54; D.B. Macdonald, "The Development of the Idea of Spirit in Islam", *Acta Orientalia*, IX (1931), 307-51).

(8) In the Qur'an, it is the Tablet preserved in the heaven, meaning the original Qur'an (85:22-23). It also means "a clear register" (*imām mubin*) which records all that happen in the world (36:12). Ghazālī rather emphasizes this latter meaning.

hear about it, so those who remain in the stage of reason would not believe the existence of the *malakut* (*Munqidh*, 138) (9).

The worlds of *mulk* and *malakūt* also correspond to this world (*dunya*) and the Hereafter (*akbirah*) (*Ihya'*, IV, 22-23). This world for each person is the world of the present life until his death, and the Hereafter is the world after his death, that is, the world of the spirit separated from the body and senses after the Small Resurrection (*al-qiyāmah al-ṣugbrā*). It is the world in the tomb, where the Inquisition by two angels, Munkar and Nakir, takes place, lasting until the Great Resurrection (*al-qiyāmah al-kubrā*). On the level of human beings as a whole, this world comes to a complete end, and then the Hereafter begins, where the Resurrection, the Assembly (*hashr*), the Judgement by Scales (*mizān*) and the Bridge (*sīrat*) and other eschatological events take place, and Paradise and Hell follow. Ghazālī does not make any essential distinction between these two Resurrections.

Thus the two worlds of *mulk* and *malakūt* are completely different, but there is a certain relation or correspondence (*muwāzanab*, *munāsabah*) between them. According to Ghazālī, the world of *mulk* is the mirror in which the world of *malakūt* is reflected. As an image (*ṣūrab*) in the mirror is the reflection of the real object, so the former is an imitation (*muḥākin*) of the latter. The image in the mirror comes second and stands for the effect of a cause on the level of being, but it comes first when you want to know yourself. This is a sort of reversal. Thus reversal is inevitable in this world of *mulk*. Therefore, man has to learn a lesson ('ibrāh) from the world of *mulk* and pass over ('ubūr) to the world of *malakūt* (*Ihya'*, IV, 99-100), since "all the happenings in this world are the symbols (*mithāl*) of the world of *malakūt*" (*Jawābir*, 28), and "there is nothing in this world that is not a symbol (*mithāl*) of a thing in the other world. Perhaps one thing may be a symbol of many things in the

(9) When Ghazālī says that prophecy or revelation (*nubuwwah*) is above reason ('*aql*), there are two meanings involved in it. For one thing, it means "a super-rational" world which transcends the human rational cognition, like the divine essence and its attributes. Secondly, it also means a kind of "super-natural" phenomena, which are natural, once known or revealed, but whose origin is super-natural, that is, beyond the grasp of reason, such as a foreknowledge of the future, the freezing effect of opium, the number of Salat and of the *rak'abs* in it, etc. (*Munqidh*, 140, 145-46, 157). On the other hand, according to Ghazālī (see below), individual beings are classified and abstracted into an essence by means of reason ('*aql*), and the world of *malakūt* is not completely separated from the work of *mulk*. (Ghazālī particularly emphasizes this aspect of reason in *Mizān al-'amal*). It is in this sense that Ghazālī characterizes the *malakūt* and the *mulk* as '*aqli* and *bissi* respectively (*Mishkāt*, 66). According to Watt, the "Ihya'" period in the development of Ghazālī's thought is characterized as the parallelism of reason and religious experience, while Ghazālī advanced later in *Munqidh* and thereafter, to the thought of the superiority of religious intuition to reason. But to my mind, the matter does not seem so simple as is seen in our previous explanation (See W.M. Watt, "The Authenticity of the Works Attributed to al-Ghazālī", *JRAS*, 1952, 27).

world of *malakūt*. Or perhaps one thing of the *malakūt* may have many symbols in the world of *shabādah*" (*Mishkāt*, 67).

Thus, the world of *malakūt* comes very close to the Platonic world of ideas, and the world of *mulk* is its imperfect imitation, or a shadow of the real world reflected on the wall of the Cave. Ghazālī denies real existence (*wujūd haqiqi*) to the physical world, and regards it as something like a shadow of a body (*Arba'in*, 53-54), and goes so far as to say that it is "pure nothing" (*adam mabd*) (*Mishkāt*, 58). Man usually, however, takes the world of *mulk* for reality and thus finds himself deceived by its external forms and figures⁽¹⁰⁾. Therefore, Ghazālī calls it "the world of falsehood and delusion" (*'alam al-zūr wa'l-ghburūr*) (*Arba'in*, 56) or "the world of deception" (*'alam al-talbis*) (*Arba'in*, 74. Cf. *Iḥyā'*, III, 39). The only difference between Ghazālī and Plato is that the world of *malakūt* is not absolute nor pre- and post-eternal like that of Ideas, but is rather a creation of God, in the same way as angels, spirits and hearts are (*Jawābir*, 11).

Ghazālī also asserts that the difference between the *malakūt* and the *mulk* is the same as that between the "hand", "face", and "eye" of God and those of a human being. Both are different, but not unrelated. The truth lies between the masculinity of transcendence (*fubūlah al-tanzih*) similarity (*unūthah al-tasbih*) (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 245).

As it is necessary to employ plain parables in order to make children understand the world of adults, so man can explain the world of *malakūt* only by means of analogues (*mathāl*) and symbols (*mithāl*), namely, things of this world. Ghazālī says :

We mean by metaphor or analogue (*mathāl*) to render a meaning (*ma'nā*) into the external form (*sūrah*)⁽¹¹⁾. So if one sees its inner meaning, he finds it true. But if he sees only its external form, he finds it deceiving... The prophets can talk to the people only by means of the metaphors (*amthāl*), since it is necessary to talk to the people in accordance with their intellect. Their intellect is on the sleeper's level. So it is necessary to make use of metaphors to explain to the sleeper... For this reason, the Messenger of God said, "The heart of the faithful is between the two fingers of the Merciful". This is a metaphor that only the gnostics understand. As for the ignorant, their understanding does not go beyond the apparent meaning, because of their ignorance of the interpretation, called "metaphorical interpretation" (*ta'wil*), as the decipherment of

(10) The image (*sūrah*) happening in the imagination from the world of *malakūt* by nature corresponds to the essential nature. Therefore, the evil idea (*ma'ani*) takes inevitably the evil form. Satan, for example, appears as a dog, a frog, or a pig, and the angels as a beautiful figure. However, in this world, where the forms and figures are dominating, they do not always reflect the meaning of idea exactly (*Iḥyā'*, I, 49; III, 39). Therefore, only the dreams of the honest and just person are right and real, and those of the liars and the evil-doers are but illusions (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 488-89).

(11) In fact, Wensinck takes *ma'nā* as Platonic idea in the above-mentioned article.

symbols in dream is called "the interpretation of dream" (*ta'bir*) (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 23-24).

(IV)

According to Ghazālī, man is able to get a glimpse of the world of *malakūt* in his sleep. In fact, dream is a message from the *malakūt*, though clad in metaphors and symbols. Verily the human heart (*qalb*) is "something subtle (*latifah*), lordly (*rabbānī*), and spiritual (*rūbānī*)" (*Iḥyā'*, III, 3), which can not be grasped by the senses. This heart is called "spirit" (*rūh*), "the serene soul" (*al-nafs al-mutma'innah*), "a precious substance" (*jawhar nafis*), "one of God's hidden secrets" (*sirr min asrār Allāh*), or "a noble pearl" (*durr 'aziz*) (*Iḥyā'*, I, 54). It is not a bodily part of man. Nonetheless, it is related to the physical heart in a way only a few are qualified to know. It is "that part of man which perceives (*mudrik*), knows (*'alim*), and intuits (*'arif*)" (*Iḥyā'*, III, 3), namely, a continuous entity of man or the subject that thinks, perceives and moves the body, which is its instrument and vessel. It is something that cannot be the object of thinking and perception. In short, it is "the essence of man" (*haqīqah al-insān*) (*Iḥyā'*, III, 3). And it belongs by nature to the world of *malakūt*. Thus it is a stranger in this world of *mulk*, and therefore it is to yearn after its original home.

While in sleep, the sense-faculties come to a temporary stop, and so the heart becomes somewhat undisturbed and free from outside stimuli. When the state of the heart thus becomes still like the waveless surface of a pond, or a polished, shiny mirror, the veil is removed momentarily between the Preserved Tablet in the heaven and the heart, and the record of the Tablet is reflected on the heart, as the images are reflected from a mirror to another. Thereupon, the imaginative faculty (*khayāl*) catches it, as the faculty is working even in sleep. It copies the knowledge with symbols or images (*mithāl*) near at hand, which remain in memory (See above, n. 10). The science of deciphering them and telling the real meaning (*ma'āni*) is called the interpretation of dream (*ilm al-ta'bir*) (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 489).

The world of the Preserved Tablet, namely, the world of *malakūt* is the world of essences, definitions or meanings (ideas), and the world of the divine essence, attributes and acts. In short, it is the world of pattern or paradigm. Real knowledge is transmitted from the world of *malakūt* to that of *mulk* only by means of the languages and images (*khayāl*) belonging to the *mulk*. The image (*khayāl*) is that which remains in the mind when one closes the eyes after seeing an object. The essence or definition of a thing can be obtained by abstraction. Ghazālī explains this as follows :

The essences of things (*haqā'iq al-ashyā'*) are written in the Preserved Tablet, or the hearts of "the angels who are brought near (to God)" (*al-muqarrabūn*). As the architect draws a plan (*nuskhah*) of a house in paper, and builds the house according to the plan, so the Creator of the heavens and the earth draws a plan (*ṣūrah*) in the Tablet and creates the world accordingly. Thus the world is produced in accordance with the pattern (*ṣūrah*).

Now from this world come images (*ṣūrah*) to the senses (*biss*) and the imagination (*khayāl*). So when one looks at the heavens and the earth and closes the eyes, their images remain in the imagination, as if he were seeing the real objects, even though they are gone. Thus the images produce an effect in the heart, and hence are produced the essences of things involved in the sense-perceptions and images. What takes place in the heart corresponds to what takes place in the imagination. What takes place in the imagination corresponds to what lies in the outer world external to the heart. Thus the existing world is identified with the plan (*nuskhah*) drawn in the Preserved Tablet (*Iḥyā'*, III, 19-20).

Thus Ghazālī mentions four levels of being (*wujūd*) in the world (*Iḥyā'*, III, 20):

- (1) The level of the Preserved Tablet, or the real being (*al-wujūd al-baqiqi*)
- (2) The physical or material being (*al-wujūd al-jismāni*)
- (3) The imaginative being (*al-wujūd al-khayāli*)
- (4) The intelligible being (*al-wujūd al-'aqlī*)⁽¹²⁾.

According to this scheme, the world has its real being in the Preserved Tablet (1). On the other end is the physical being (2), which man perceives by his senses. The sensible image of each object in this physical being or the phenomenal world is the world of the imaginative being (3). From these sensible images are extracted the essence (*baqiqah*), the universal concept or meaning (*ma'nā*). This is the intelligible being (4). All this process (2) → (3) → (4) takes place in the human heart or mind. And what thus obtains is essentially the same as what is written in the Preserved Tablet, or the world of the real meaning.

On the other hand, once the veil between the human heart and the Preserved Tablet is lifted, man sees the realities in there, or true knowledge emanates from there directly to his heart. This is the process (1) → (4), which is the goal of the Sufis. For this purpose, they simply polish and cultivate their heart through the mystical practices and exercises

(12) Ghazālī gives us various classification of being. For example, (I) the world of the sensibles (*mabsūsat*); the imaginatives (*mutakbayyalat*); the estimables (*mawbiimat*); and the intelligibles (*ma'qilat*) (*Kimiya*, 99). (II) the worlds of reality (*haqiqah*) or individuals (*a'yān*); image (*mithal*) and knowledge (*'ilm*) in the mind (*dbihm*); their expressions in sound (*la'z, lisān*); and their expressions in writing (*kitabah*) (*Mibakk al-nazar*, 119-20; *Iljam*, 290; *Mustasfa*, I, 21-22; *Maqsad*, 18-19). The latter classification (II) apparently refers to the human activity of speech or language.

(*riyādah, mujāhadah*), rather than read books to obtain knowledge therefrom⁽¹³⁾.

Now we have two ways for the human cognition of true reality : one is (2) → (3) → (4), and the other is (1) → (4). In this latter case, when direct knowledge from on high is conveyed by the prophets in words or symbols, it goes like (1) → (4) → (3). All this corresponds to two "windows" of the heart : one is open to the world of *mulk* and the other to that of *malakūt*.

Thus, the Qur'an, or the revelation from the world of *malakūt* is expressed in the symbols or metaphors, and therefore must be interpreted as such. Each being has an essence (*haqīqah*) or a definition (*hadd*), which is its spirit (*rūb*). When man is thus led to the world of spirits ('ālam al-*arwāh*), he becomes spiritual (*rūbānī*), and the door of the world of *malakūt* is opened to him. The Qur'an is the signs (*ishārat*) revealed in this way. Therefore, it is necessary to interpret the Qur'an allegorically in the same way as to decipher the dreams (*Jawābir*, 30-31).

For example, if we define the "pen" (*qalam*) as something to write with, it is possible to call "a pen" that with which to write knowledge in the "tablets" of the human heart (*al-wāb al-qulūb*). In fact, God is said to have given knowledge to man with the pen (Cf. Q. 96: 4-5). What matters here is the essence of a pen, not its external form. In like manner, the Resurrection, the Judgement thereafter, the Scale for weighing the human conducts, the Bridge to pass over and so forth, all of these terms have both apparent (*zawāhir jātiyah*) and inner meanings (*asrār ghāmidah*). These two meanings are both true respectively for the common people and the elect (*Jawābir*, 14). In the same way, the meanings of the description in the Qur'an and the Hadith about the Paradise and Hell, the number of Salat and its *rak'ahs* in it, the various "peculiar" rites in Hajj, the freezing effect of opium in the blood, the harmful effect of honey to hot things, future events, and other similar phenomena can be known only by reading the world of *malakūt* (*Mizan*, 353-54; *Arba'in*, 93-94; *Munqidh*, 155-57)⁽¹⁴⁾.

(13) Hence, "the Sufis tend to seek inspirational knowledge (*al-'ulūm al-ilhāmiyah*), rather than instructive one (*al-ta'līmiyah*). For this reason, they do not want to learn knowledge, master the works of the authors and study the theories and the proposed proofs. Rather the right method, they say, is to give priority to practices and removing the evil qualities..." (*Ihya'*, III, 18). Ghazali compares the former to the way to obtain water by keeping on digging the earth, and the latter to that by making a ditch to draw water from the river. He also compares the former to seeing the sun directly and the latter to seeing the sun reflected on the water indirectly (*Ihya'*, III, 18-19). It is true that Ghazali stresses the inner meaning, but this does not mean that Ghazali disregards the literal and external (*zāhir*) meaning. On the contrary, he often warns against such an attitude (*Misbāk*, 73).

(14) It may be worth noting here, on this occasion, to mention briefly Ghazali's hermeneutics (*ta'wil*) of the holy texts. To my knowledge, he has two main principles. One is that it is impossible to prove things in the invisible world (*al-ghayb*) from things in this world

In sum, real knowledge from the world of *malakūt* reaches the human heart and is there transformed and expressed in symbols (*mithal*) or metaphors (*mathal*) by imagination (*khayāl*). On the other hand, man also grasps real knowledge by extracting the essence from the images (*khayāl*) which are reflections of the phenomenal world as symbols and metaphors. Thus man is the intermediate link between the worlds of *mulk* and *malakūt*.

(V)

Now we are ready to discuss our main subject in this paper : Ghazālī's concept of *jabarūt*. His descriptions, however, are very few, and their meaning is vague and rather enigmatic⁽¹⁵⁾. This forms a striking and strange contrast to his descriptions of the other two worlds of *mulk* and *malakūt*. So we must be very careful in interpreting them.

The following are the main passages we have on *jabarūt* :

(1) As for what you hear about the definition of the world of *jabarūt*, it belongs to the power (*qudrab*), which is produced for the intellect (*aql*) and knowledge (*ilm*) in the human, and which lies in the faculty of estimation (*al-quwwah al-wabniyah*) that perceives the one whose existence does not require a body, though it may happen to be in a body, as a lamb perceives a wolf's enmity and mother-sheep's tender love, so that he is attracted to the love and runs away from the enmity (*Imlā'*, 183-84).

(2) ... the definition of the world of *jabarūt* is that it lies between the two worlds (the *mulk* and the *malakūt*) ; it seems to belong to the world of *mulk* externally, but it is conjoined to the world of *malakūt* by the Eternal Power (of God) (*Imlā'*, 187).

(3) According to another division, the worlds are divided into the world of *mulk*, which is external to the senses, and the world of *malakūt*, which is inside the intellect (*al-batin fi l-aql*), and the world of *jabarūt*, which is the intermediate world that partly belongs to both of them. Thus man is divided in the same division : Similar to the world of *mulk* are the sensible parts, which

(*al-shabid*), against the Mu'tazilites who approve the continuity of the two worlds. So the former should be literally taken, no matter how unusual and irrational it appears to be, unless it is a logical contradiction. Thus, all the eschatological events such as the bodily resurrection, the physical joy and pain in the Hereafter described in the Qur'an and Hadith are literally true and should not be interpreted as metaphors. (As is well known, this is the traditional Ash'arite standpoint.) However, it is not possible, for example, to suppose that God is literally sitting on the throne in the heaven, or that man can see Him by his physical eyes in this world, since it is a logical contradiction to admit space, direction, form, transition and the like to God. These expressions, therefore, must be interpreted (*ta'wil*) (*Tabaqat*, 293). All this is for the common people. The other principle is the interpretation we have discussed so far for the elect. They enjoy the spiritual and intellectual joy which is much greater than the physical and sensuous one in the Hereafter (*ibid.*, 287).

(15) Cf. F. Jabre, *Essai sur le lexique de Ghazali* (Beirut, 1970), 46.

you already know ; similar to the world of *malakūt* are those parts such as the spirit (*rūb*), intellect (*'aql*), power (*qudrab*), will (*irādah*) and the like ; similar to the world of *jabarūt* are the perceptions produced by the senses and faculties (*quwā*) in the bodily organs (*Imlā'*, 190).

(4) Know that the pure light of real knowledge (*mabd anwār al-ma'rīfah*) emanates to the inner heart from the world of *malakūt*, since it (the heart) likewise belongs to the *malakūt*. As for its effects such as awe, fear, joy, dread and similar feelings, they descend from the world of *jabarūt*. Their descending place is the chest which is the world of *jabarūt*. It is one of your worlds to which we alluded by " chest ", as we alluded to the first as " heart ", since the world of *jabarūt* lies between the world of *malakūt* and that of *shabādah*, as the chest lies between the heart and the limbs of the body (*Arba'in*, 49).

(5) Know that the worlds... are three in number. The first is the world of *mulk* and *shabādah*. Certainly paper, ink, pen and hand (when you write with a pen) are all of this world. You have already passed these stages easily. The second is the world of *malakūt*, which lies behind me⁽¹⁶⁾. If you pass me over, you reach its stages, where there are huge spaces, high mountains and deep oceans. I do not know how you can be safe in there. The third is the world of *jabarūt*, which lies between the world of *mulk* and that of *malakūt*. You have already crossed the three (*sic*) stages, the beginnings of which are the stage of power, will and knowledge. It is intermediary between the world of *mulk* and *shabādah* and that of *malakūt*, since the world of *mulk* is easier than it (*jabarūt*) as a path, and the world of *malakūt* is more difficult than it as a passage. The world of *jabarūt* between the worlds of *mulk* and *malakūt* well resembles a ship that moves between the land and the water. The ship is neither in the boundary of the confusion of the waters, nor in the boundary of the serenity and security of the land. Any one who walks on the earth walks in the world of *mulk* and *shabādah*. When his ability becomes strong enough to ride on a ship, he becomes like a man who walks in the world of *jabarūt*. When he finally becomes able to walk on the waters without a ship, he walks in the world of *malakūt* without any wavering (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 244-45).

(6) As for those who deny (the world of *malakūt*), they are like the Sumaniyah, who deny the world of *jabarūt*. They are those who confine perceptions to the five senses and deny the power, will, and knowledge, because they are not perceived by the five senses (*Iḥyā'*, IV, 247).

From all these passages, it is clear, first, that *jabarūt* is the intermediate world between the world of *mulk* and that of *malakūt*. Second, it is somewhat related to the human faculties and processes of perception and cognition, and to the power leading to action. Third, it also denotes that part of the chest between the heart and the limbs where the various feelings appear. Does the *jabarūt* as the intermediate world mean that it is also external to man as it is an internal world within him ?

(16) Here the personified intellect (*'aql*) is supposed to be talking to the ant. See below, p. 16.

(VI)

Before we proceed to discuss these questions and narrow down Ghazālī's concept of *jabarūt*, I would like to quote the following paraphrased passage from *Iḥyā 'ulūm al-dīn* on the Tawhīd.

An ant is creeping on a sheet of paper. Seeing the surface of the paper being blackened, he asks the paper, "What is the matter?" The paper answers, "I do not know. Ask the ink". Being asked, the ink says, "I do not know, because I was just drawn out of the inkpot by a pen. So ask the pen". The pen answers to the ant, "I am moving as the hand makes me so move. So ask the hand". Then, the hand replies, "I am made of muscles, bones and blood like a dead hand, and simply made to move by a power. So ask the power". Being asked, the power says, "Certainly I am a power, but I am completely controlled by a will. So ask him". Thereupon, the will answers, "I was resting, when the categorical order (*qukm qābir, amr jāzim*) came and drove me that way. That is to say, when 'the messenger of knowledge' (*rasūl al-'ilm*) brought to the heart from the intellect the decree to drive the power, I was compelled to move the power. I am an obedient servant of the intellect (*aql*) and knowledge". So the ant asks the intellect, heart and knowledge. First, the intellect says, "I am like a lamp. But I am not burning by myself, but made to burn". The heart says, "I am like a writing board. I am not lying open by myself, but made to do so". The knowledge says, "I am like an inscription (*naqsh*). I am simply inscribed in the board of the heart, when the lamp of the intellect shines. I am not inscribing by myself. The Divine Pen (*qalam ilāhi*) does so. So ask him". This Divine Pen describes various kinds of knowledge in the human hearts. But it is also under complete control. Then the ant asks "the right hand of the angel" (*yamin al-malāk*), who says, "I am simply playing the same role as the earthly pen, and totally controlled by 'the world of the Divine Power' (*'ālam al-qudrāh*). So ask him". Then, the Power says, "I am one of the Divine Attributes. So ask the Possessor of the Power (*al-Qābir*)". Thus the ant is led to the One Great Mighty King (*al-Malik al-Jabbar al-Wahid al-Qābir*), namely, God Himself" (*Iḥyā*, IV, 243-46; *Arba'in*, 241-42).

In this passage, we are able to distinguish four stages of the divine control of the human conducts :

- (a) The visible aspect of the human conduct – the paper, ink, pen, hand and their movements.
- (b) The invisible aspect inside the human conduct – the human power, will, intellect, heart and knowledge.
- (c) The invisible aspect outside the human conduct – the Divine Pen, the right hand of the angels.
- (d) The invisible aspect of God – the Divine Power (the Divine Attributes), the Divine Essence.

With this scheme and the theory of being mentioned before (See above, p. 12) in mind, let us review and analyse Ghazālī's six descriptions of *jabarūt* cited above.

In the passage (1), Ghazālī says that the *jabarūt* belongs to the human power or faculty to execute the directions given by the intellect and knowledge, and to perceive the abstract notions like enmity and love expressed in the concrete objects and to drive the subject into a certain movement. All this refers to the stage (b), i.e., invisible aspect of human conduct. This is more clearly expressed in the passage (6).

In the passage (2), Ghazālī says, "it (the *jabarūt*) seems to belong to the world of *mulk* externally (*fi l-zāhir*)", meaning apparently the human external conduct, and when he says, "but it is conjoined to the world of *malakūt* by the Eternal Power", he means the inner process in the human behavior which is completely dominated by the Divine Power and Decree outside the human being (*malakūt*), as seen in the stages (c) and (d) in the passage (above, p. 16). Thus the *jabarūt* here means a man himself.

In the passage (3), it is said that the worlds consist of the *mulk*, the *malakūt* which is inside the intellect, and the *jabarūt* which belongs partially to the other two worlds. In this case, too, the *jabarūt* should be understood as a human being in his totality. And this human being himself is said to be "divided in the same division" into three parts : *mulk*, *malakūt* and *jabarūt*. His "sensible parts" are of *mulk*; "the spirit (*rūb*), intellect (*aql*), power (*qudrab*), will (*iradah*) and the like" are of *malakūt*, and "the perceptions produced by the senses and faculties" apparently refer to the images (*khayal*) produced in the heart in the passage (above, p. 12). These images give rise to the feelings and drives leading to actions, as mentioned in the passage (4).

The problem, however, is that "the spirit, intellect, power, will and the like" are said to belong to the *malakūt*. Except the spirit, and perhaps the intellect, which belong to the *malakūt*, they are usually said to belong to the world of *jabarūt*, as seen in the passages (5) and (6) below. How can we solve this contradiction? At this juncture, we may quote the following passage :

Verily God's justice (*'adl*) is realized either through things above yourself, or through yourself, since you yourself are also of His Acts; your desire (*da'iyyah*), your power, your knowledge, your behavior, and any other causes of your movements under consideration are all His Acts which He has arranged with justice so that the orderly acts (*al-af'al al-mu'tadilah*) may come thereupon. You see, however, nothing but yourself (in them) (*Ihya'*, IV, 95).

In this passage, it is said that all the "causes of your movements" (*asbab harakat-ka*), such as desire, power, knowledge and so on have two aspects : one is human and the other divine. If the former is of the *jabarūt* (and *mulk*), and the latter is of the *malakūt*, then it is possible that Ghazālī is here referring to the latter (divine) aspect of the power, will and the like in the human behavior.

In the passage (4), Ghazālī says that the feelings such as awe, fear, joy and the like descend from the world of *jabarūt*, and that the descending place is the chest. The feelings are apparently caused by the perceptions produced by the images.

In the passage (5), the world of *jabarūt* is said to “resemble the ship that moves between the land and the water”. This sounds like an enigma. But Ghazālī elaborates this metaphor a little more in another place.

His walking back and forth in the world of the sensibles (*'alam-i mabsūsat*) is like going on the land, and so everybody can do so. His walking in the fourth (*sic*) world, or that of the pure spirits and the real essences (*haqā'iq*) of the works is like going on the water. His walking back and forth in the world of imaginatives (*mawhūmat*) is like going in the ship, and so his level is between the water and the land. Beyond the level of the intelligibles (*ma'qūlat*) is a stage for the prophets, saints and the Sufis. Their level is like going in the air (*Kimiya*, 100).

In this passage just cited, Ghazālī mentions four stages or worlds – the worlds of (1) the sensibles (metaphorically expressed as land), (2) the imaginatives (ship), (3) the pure spirits and the realities of the works (*kār-hā*) (the intelligibles) (water), and (4) the prophets, the saints and the Sufis (air). The first three of these four worlds correspond to *mulk*, *jabarūt* and *malakūt* respectively. The problem is the world (4) of the prophets, the saints and the Sufis. Though it is difficult to pinpoint the exact meaning of this world, it is certain that it belongs to the *malakūt*, since it is the highest of the four worlds (Probably it refers to the world of “the pure oneness”, “the absolute unity” mentioned below in pp. 21-22). In any case, the world of ship or *jabarūt* is that of the imaginatives, which, together with the human knowledge, will, power and the like, constitutes the inner process of the human behavior. But the issue is how to interpret the symbolism of the “land”, “water”, “ship” and “air”.

It is easy to know that “the land” stands for the sensibles, or the phenomenal world, which the common people can know for certain. Then, what about “the ship”? In this connection, the following passage is illuminating. Ghazālī is here talking about the relationship between the Divine Determination and the human “free will”.

... the drive of the human wish (*da'iyyah al-irādah*) is totally subject to the judgement of the intellect (*aql*) and the senses, and the power (*qudrat*) is totally subject to the drive, and the movement (of the limbs) is totally subject to the power. All is predetermined (*muqaddar*) by necessity (*bi l-darūrah*) in him in a place where he does not know. He is simply the locus where these things happen. Nothing comes from him. So the meaning of his being compelled (*majbūr*) is that all those occur in him not from within himself, but from other than himself. The meaning of his having free will (*mukhtār*) is that he is the locus for the will which happens to him under compulsion (*jabran*) after the

intellect gives a judgement that a certain act is pure good and useful. And the judgement takes place under compulsion, too, (after knowledge). Thus, he is compelled to choose freely by his free will (*majbūr 'ala l-ikhtiyār*) (*Iḥyā*, IV, 249. Cf. 5-7).

According to this passage, and the previously cited one on the *Tawhīd* (p. 16), in addition to the citation on the dual aspects of man (p. 17), every human conduct is completely dominated through a series of occasions (*asbāb*) by God, even when it is done by his own free will. Ghazālī compares this to a puppet (*Iḥyā*, IV, 95). Thus we may conclude that "the ship" stands for each human being as the locus (*mahall*) for God's execution of His predetermination. What takes place within a man such as knowledge, judgement, will, power and various feelings is certainly not visible, and therefore it is not of the world of *mulk*. Nor is it of the world of *malakūt*, since he is conscious of all these and knows they are *bis*. But it is extremely difficult for him to know in reality, or to realize, that they are God's, though he may know this truth intellectually. Thus the ship moves between the land and the water, namely, in the world of *jabarūt*, above which lies the world of *malakūt*. On the other hand, to walk on the water means not only to know that he is a mere puppet of God, but also to become a mere puppet by annihilating himself.

We may say in conclusion that the world of *jabarūt* stands, first, for the human individual as a whole, and, secondly, the human inner process from knowledge to impulse to overt behavior.

(VII)

Finally I will characterize Ghazālī's cosmology in comparison with those of Suhrawardī Maqtūl (d. 1191) and Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240)⁽¹⁷⁾. According to Suhrawardī, the world (being) is divided into four levels: (1) the world of *jabarūt*, or that of cherubic pure intelligences, (2) the world of *malakūt*, or that of celestial angels or souls and of human souls, (3) the *mundus imaginalis* (*'ālam al-mithāl*), or the world of self-subsisting, autonomous forms or images in the immaterial state of "subtle matter", which lies at the entrance to the world of *malakūt*, and (4) the world of *mulk*, or the phenomenal world.

(17) For these two thinkers, see the following works: H. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*. 4 vols., Paris, 1971-72; *do.*, *Histoire de la philosophie islamique*. Paris, 1986; *do.*, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*. Tr. by R. Manheim. Princeton, 1969; T. Izutsu, *A Comparative Study of the Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism*. 2 vols. Tokyo, 1966-67; W.C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*. Albany, 1989; A.E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din-Ibnul Arabi*. Repr. Lahore, 1964.

The scheme of Ibn 'Arabi's cosmology is almost the same, but he emphasizes particularly the concept of Imagination (*khayāl*). He distinguishes two kinds in it : one is the world of "an imagination conjoined to the imagining subject and inseparable from him" (*khayāl muttaṣil*)⁽¹⁸⁾ and the other the world of "a self-subsisting imagination dissociable from the subject" (*khayāl munfaṣil*). The former belongs to a conscious process of the mind within the subject, while the latter has an autonomous and subsisting reality *sui generis* on the plane of the intermediary world, that is, the world of Ideas-Images (*'ālam al-mīthāl*, *'ālam al-mīthāl wa 'l-khayāl*). The gnostic (*ārif*) is capable of influencing the detached Imagination or the world of Images through his creative imagination and *him-mah*, and thus produce changes in the outer world.

Apparently Ghazāli's *malakūt* corresponds to the *jabarūt* and *ma-lakūt* of Suhrawardi and Ibn 'Arabi taken together : the *mulk* is the same for them all. Then, the problem is the *jabarūt* of Ghazāli and the *'ālam al-mīthāl*. Both are often called "the intermediate world between the *mulk* and the *malakūt*". From our previous discussions, however, the *jabarūt* is quite different from the *'ālam al-mīthāl* that is understood by Ibn 'Arabi. It is true that the *jabarūt* for Ghazāli is the world within a man, consisting of imagination or image (*khayāl*), together with knowledge, will, power and the like, but it is not an independent external world. In fact, for Ghazāli, the terms *mīthāl* and *mathāl* are used to denote the phenomenal world and its elements as the symbols or metaphors of the world of *malakūt*. Since the world of *mulk* for Ghazāli is an imperfect replica or analogue of the world of *malakūt*, *mīthāl* and *mathāl* are used rather negatively, since there is no reality in them ; they are certainly images in the imagination, but never used in the sense of the archetypal forms or ideas-images. Yet consider the following passage :

The first step is to go toward God (*al-dhabab ilā Allāh*) and then to go into God (*al-dhabab fi Allāh*). This is the annihilation (*fānā*) and immersion (*istighraq*) in Him. But this immersion occurs like a sudden lightning at the outset. It seldom remains stable and does not last long. When it lasts, it becomes established as a custom and a permanent form. Then, he goes up to the higher world (*al-'ālam al-a'lā*) and knows the purer real being (*al-wujūd al-baqiqi al-asfa*), and impressed in him is the inscription of the *malakūt* and disclosed the Holy Divinity (*qudus al-labūt*). The first things that appear to him from that world are the forms of the angels (*jawābir al-mala'ikah*), the spirits of the prophets and the saints in a beautiful shape, through which some realities emanate to him. This happens in the beginning, and then he passes over the level of ideas-images (*mīthāl*). Finally, he confronts the Reality (*al-Haqq*) nakedly in everything. When he comes back to the world of metaphors (*al-'ālam*

(18) For this aspect of Ibn 'Arabi's *khayāl*, see Mahmūd Qāsim, *al-Khayāl fi madhbhab Mubī l-Dīn b. 'Arabi*. Cairo, 1969.

al-majazi), which is but a shadow, and sees the people, he feels pity, because they are unable to know the beauty of the Holy Precinct (*jamal bazirah al-qudus*), and is surprised to see that they are satisfied with the shadow and deceived in the world of deception (*'alam al-ghurūr*) and that of fantasy (*'alam al-khayal*). Thus he is among with them personally, but is a stranger in his heart (*Arba'in*, 54-55).

In this passage, “the level of ideas-images (*mithāl*)” is identified with the world of “the forms (*jawābir*) of the angels, the spirits of the prophets and the saints in a beautiful shape”, which could be taken to mean the world of ideas-images in the cosmological sense. On the other hand, it is also possible to take it as the description of the mystical experience of the Sufi. And I think the latter interpretation is more natural in the whole context.

L. Gardet seems to identify the *jabarūt* with “the world of the archetypal images”⁽¹⁹⁾. Since he does not mention the sources for this interpretation, it is not clear that he refers to this passage. As we see, Ghazāli's usage of the term *khayal* is limited to the imagination or the imaginative faculty of man, and thus the images in the imagination. So *khayal* is closely connected with *mithal* or *mathab*.

But why is it that the world of *jabarūt* or *mithal* is little elaborated by Ghazāli in comparison with the other two concepts? Why is it that it is given but a minor role and not developed further into something like “the world of the detached imagination” (*'alam al-khayal al-munfasil*)? This is all the more peculiar, when we remember that Ghazāli's ontology has almost reached that of Ibn 'Arabī, particularly in his *Mishkāt*⁽²⁰⁾.

Nay, just as there is no god but He, so there is no it but He, for “it” (*buwa*) is an expression (*isbārah*) of anything that one can indicate, no matter how it may be. So there is no indication (*isbārah*) but to Him. Rather, no matter what you indicate, it is, in reality, an indication to Him, even though you do not know it through your ignorance of the realities (*haqīqah al-baqā'iq*) which we have mentioned. Just as one cannot indicate sunlight but only the sun, so the relation of the sum of things to God is, in the visible analogue (*mithāl*), like the relation of light to the sun. Therefore. “There is no god but God” is the commoner's confession of the Unity of God; that of the elect is “There is no it but He”. The latter is more perfect, more particular, more comprehensive, more real, and more subtle, and gives him who confesses it entrance into the pure oneness (*al-fardānyah al-mahdah*) and absolute unity (*al-wahdāniyah al-sirfah*). The kingdom of oneness is the ultimate point of mortals' ascent; there is no ascending stage beyond it; for “ascending” (*taraqqi*) involves plurality (*kathrah*), being a sort of relation (*idāfah*) involving two stages, an ascent *from* and an ascent *to*. But when plurality has been eliminated, unity (*wahdah*) is established, relation is effaced, all indications from “here” to “there” fall away, and there

(19) L. Gardet, “'Ālam”, *EF*, I, 351.

(20) A.A. 'Affifi, “taṣdir 'amm”, 14.

remains neither height nor depth, nor any one to fare up or down. The upward progress and the ascent, then, become impossible, for there is no height beyond the highest, no plurality along-side of the unity, nor ascent with plurality being terminated. If there is any change, it is by way of “the descent into the lowest heaven” (*nuzūl ilā sama’ al-dunya*), by which I mean looking down from above (*isbrāf*) ; for the highest, though it may have no higher, has a lower. This is the goal of goals, the final destination of spiritual search, known to him who knows it, denied by him who is ignorant of it (*Mishkāt*, 60-61. Cf. Gairdner’s translation, pp. 112-14).

The ascent from the world of plurality to that of “the absolute unity” or “the pure oneness” reminds us of the transition from the *Wāhidīyah* to the *Abādiyah* in Ibn ‘Arabī. This is particularly so, when we remember the above citation on the itinerary of an ant toward God’s essence (p. 16).

We are, however, not in the position to answer the above-mentioned questions here in this paper. But we may hint some solutions. First, all the passages and descriptions by Ghazālī are, in the end, experiential rather than ontological. His interest is in the process of *human* advancement toward God and *human* descent therefrom, not the *divine* descent or theophany. Secondly, God for Ghazālī remains, after all, a Creator *ex nihilo* of the phenomenal world according to the ideas in the world of *malakūt*. This does not necessitate the existence of the external world of Imagination between the *malakūt* and the *mulk*. He has only to create the world of *mulk* out of nothing. In contrast, man is able to obtain the knowledge of the true nature of things only by means of images and imagination in him. For Ibn ‘Arabī, on the other hand, the Ultimate Reality is the impersonal absolute One (*Abād*), and the phenomenal world is the self-manifestation (*tajallī*) of this One through various stages (*badarāt*). Personal “Allah” is regarded as the first self-manifestation of the One within Itself. Therefore, it is necessary for the Absolute One to reveal Itself first in the world of the divine names and attributes, and then in the concrete material world *through* the world of detached imagination as immaterial concrete images. In this sense, ‘Affifī is right in saying that Ghazālī’s Tawḥid is “the unity of witnessing” (*wabdah shuhūd*), rather than “the unity of being” (*waḥdah wujūd*)⁽²¹⁾.

Koiji NAKAMURA
(University of Tokyo)

(21) A.A. ‘Affifī, *ibid.*, 15.